29 December, 2008

To:
Mr. Wayne Yoshioka
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Subject: Comment on Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) "Honolulu High-capacity transit corridor Project",

Issue : The DEIS lacks goal to eliminate or substantially reduce traffic congestion

Discussion:
DEIS Section 1.8 cites needs for Transit improvements but does not include the single and most important reason for building mass transit: To provide TRAFFIC RELIEF during peak hour. The city cit Alternative Analysis and DEIS show that rail transit, despite costing over $6.0 billion, will not provide traffic relief. In fact, after rail is built and operating, The AA shows that the traffic overload on H-1 (capacity – 9,500 vehicles per hour) at Kalauao will rise from the present 11,000 vph to 17,400 vph!

Therefore rail should NOT be considered as a candidate for Oahu mass transit because it does not accomplish the "MISSION" of mass transit. ALL other reasons for building rail transit are secondary and do NOT justify spending at least $6.0 Billion of taxpayers dollars.

I have read the City's Alternative Analysis and UH Professor Panos Prevedouros Study "Transportation Alternative Analysis for Mitigating Traffic Congestion between Leeward Oahu and Honolulu." The HOT Lanes outlined in the Professor's study will provide a separate express highway to bypass the known traffic bottlenecks at Pearl City and at Middle Street and will reduce H-1 congestion by 35 percent. HOT will cost of less than $900 Million (Tampa built a similar 10 mile three-lane HOT for $320 million in 2005.

Another option is to build two Flyover bypasses around the two major H-1 bottlenecks described as follows:

Nimitz Flyover, Reversible HOV:

The Nimitz HOV Flyover is a 3-mile reversible, elevated, three-lane structure over the Nimitz Highway median from the Airport Viaduct at Keehi Lagoon to Hotel Street and Alakea St/Halekauwila St. The Flyover would be built similar to the Tampa Elevated three-lane Reversible HOV as described in- http://www.tollroadsnews.com/node/172 .

One of the three lanes would exit the Flyover at Waikamilo Rd. to provide access to job centers in Kalihi, resulting in the Flyover having only two lanes entering downtown. The downtown terminal connections from the Nimitz HOV Flyover include an elevated busway from Iwilei to

Hotel Street and a single lane underpass to both Alakea St/Halekauwila Streets. These connections are described in a Managed Lane Study "Transportation Alternatives Analysis for Mitigating Traffic congestion between Leeward Oahu and Honolulu". The full report is available at www.eng.hawaii.edu/~panos/UHCS.pdf.

The initial 2005 cost for the 10 mile Tampa Reversible was $320 million or $32 Million per highway mile, however, a geotechnical design error increased the cost to $420 million or $42 million per mile. Using a geographic and escalation factor of 100 percent, the 3-mile Nimitz HOV Flyover at $60 to $80 million per mile would cost $180 million to $240 million.

The "Nimitz Flyover" has an approved Final Environmental Impact Statement which allows for early construction.

Kamehameha Flyover, Reversible HOV:

The Kamehameha HOV Flyover is a 4-mile reversible, elevated, three-lane structure over the median of Kamehameha Highway from the H-1/H-2 merge at the Waiawa Interchange to the Airport Viaduct just diamond head of the Aloha Stadium. The Flyover should be built similar to the Tampa Elevated three-lane Reversible HOV as described in- http://www.tollroadsnews.com/node/172 .

The Kamehameha Flyover should be connected to H-1, H-2, Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway at the west end and to the Airport Viaduct at the east end. These connections are described in a Managed Lane Study "Transportation Alternatives Analysis for Mitigating Traffic congestion between Leeward Oahu and Honolulu". The full report is available at www.eng.hawaii.edu/~panos/UHCS.pdf.

The initial 2005 cost for the 10 mile Tampa Reversible was $320 million or $32 Million per highway mile, however, a geotechnical design error increased the cost to $420 million or $42 million per mile. Using a geographic and escalation factor of 100 percent, the 4-mile Kamehameha HOV Flyover at $60 to $80 million per mile would cost between $240 million to $320 million.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) - Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project Nov 2008 , shows the rail route over Kamehameha Highway between Pearl City and Aloha Stadium which could conflict with the proposed three-lane "Kamehameha Flyover" route outlined above. If the rail is built, it is suggested that both the Kamehameha Highway "Flyover" and the Rail be built within the elevated Kamehameha Highway corridor. In this case, only a two-lane "Kamehameha Flyover" is needed (instead of three-lanes) to be built alongside and parallel to the Rail transit. The rail with a capacity of 6,000 commuters per hour and the two-lane "Kamehameha Flyover", with a capacity of 4,000 vehicles per hour, should be adequate to substantially reduce the bottleneck at the H-1/H-2 merge and the traffic congestion on H-1 between Pearl City and Aloha Stadium.

Conclusion:
The Kamehameha and Nimitz Flyovers are cost effective alternatives for mass transit.

Recommendation:
Include the Kamehameha Flyover and Nimitz Flyover Alternatives for mass transit consideration in the DEIS.

Respectfully,

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